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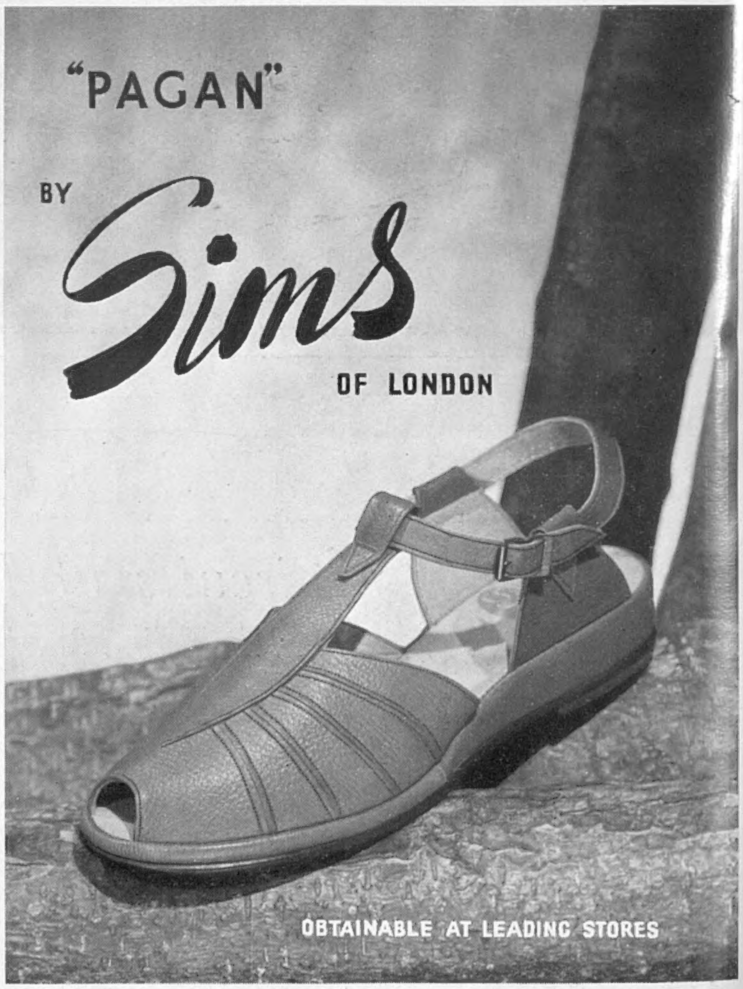

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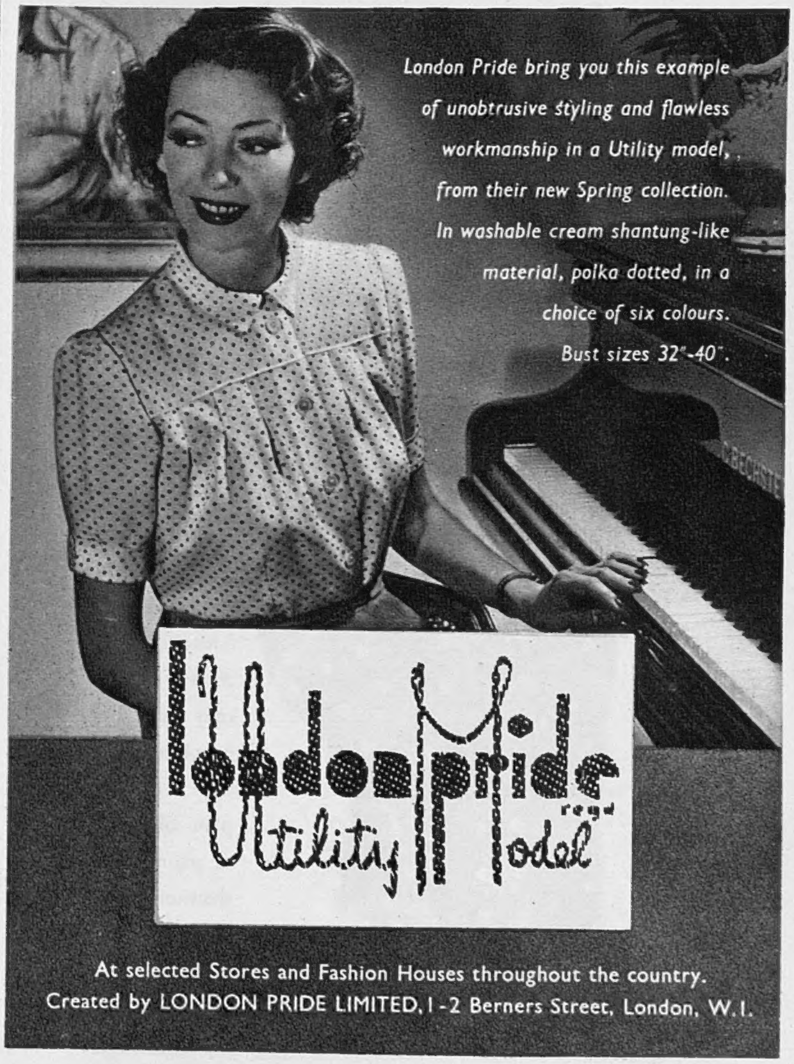

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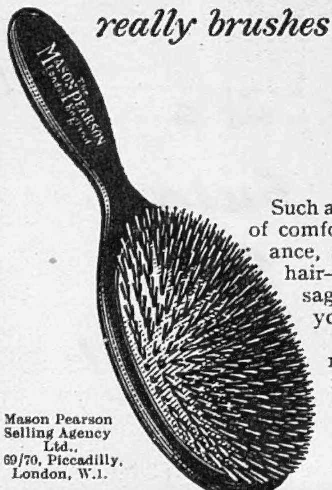

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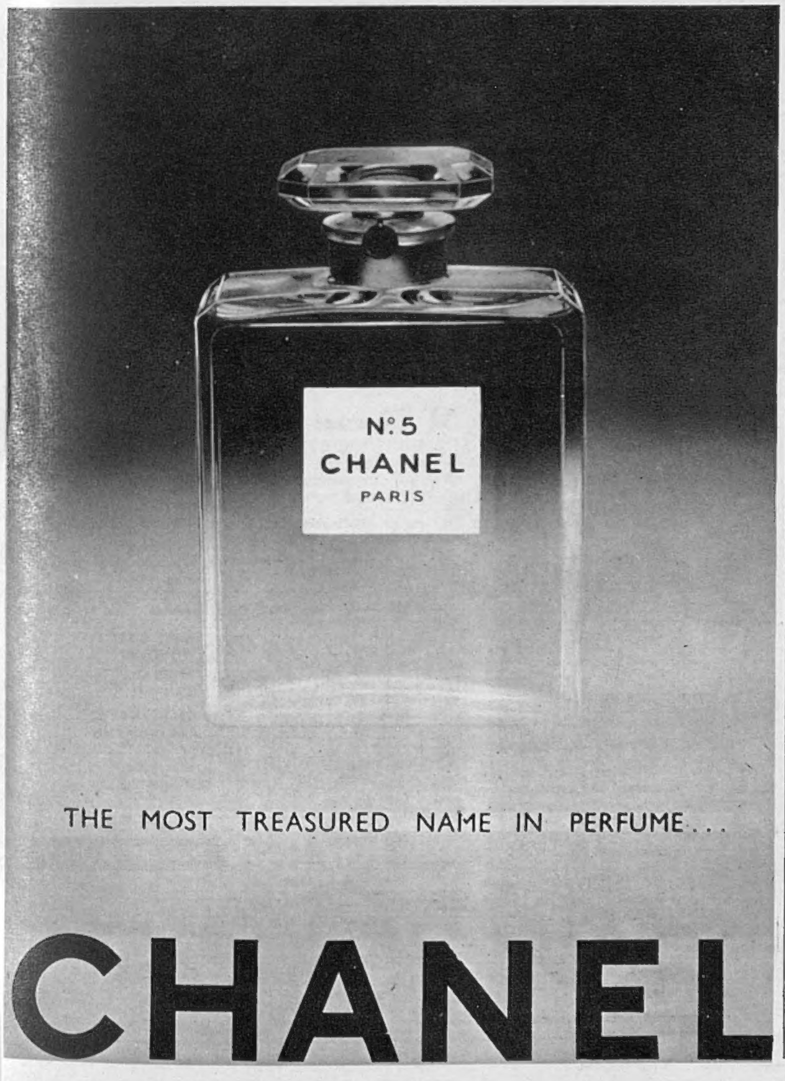

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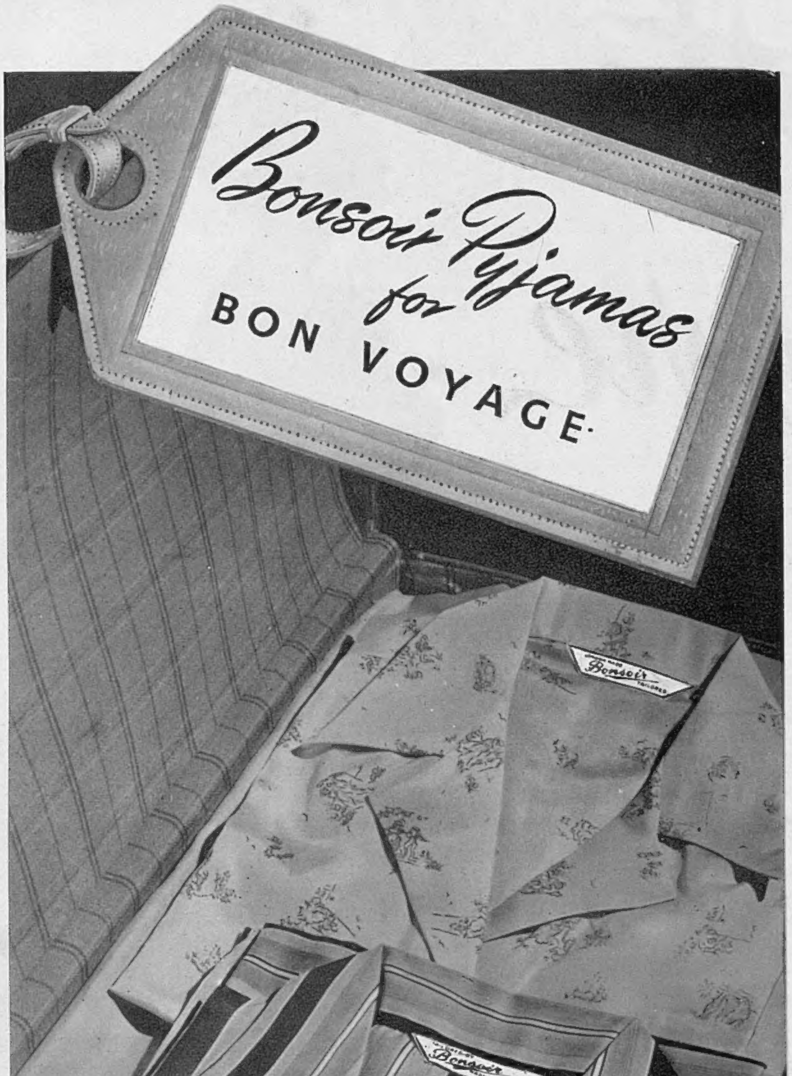

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The Sketch
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1950

FOR BROADWAY

JUVENILE of *Black Chiffon* at the Westminster, Dorothy Gordon is due on Broadway in October, with leads Flora Robson, Wyndham Goldie, and the complete cast and production. They go on tour in May before sailing for New York. Dorothy's ancestry is Irish-Scots; she made her stage début when six years old. [Photographed by ANGUS McBEAN.]

The Sketch
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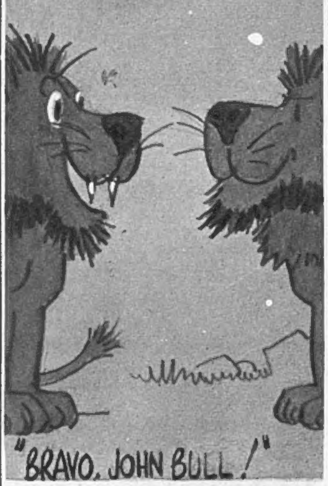


CEREMONIAL ARGUMENT: A demon-dance was part of the pageantry attending the recent return to Bangkok after three years' study in Switzerland of the young King of Siam, for his coronation and marriage.

Sketch-Book

BEVERLEY BAXTER

IT may be that a hundred years from now the then author of *Sketch-Book* will turn up the files of this family journal to see what was occupying our thoughts in the year 1950. Therefore, to save him trouble, I shall describe the events and experiences of a recent day as they impressed themselves on my memory.

The newspapers carried the story of how a small boy had murdered his brother, how two young men had beaten up an old woman and stolen her bag, how the police fought a fierce struggle with three bandits, how a condemned murderer, on the eve of his execution, wrote letters to two women protesting his undying love, and how various other citizens, demonstrating their particular version of private enterprise, coshed, bashed and bludgeoned a number of helpless people.

For full measure we also read that in America a girl had murdered her twin sister and was glad about it, and an undergraduate had killed his girl friend by the interesting experiment of pressing a vein in her neck.

In the House of Lords there was a debate as to whether flogging, or at least birching, should be restored, but the Government refused, on the grounds that by committing a murderous assault a criminal's body became sacrosanct.

Coming home to dinner I turned on the Light Programme of the B.B.C., and a ghostly voice said: " She was lying on the floor, with no clothes except a pair of silk stockings. Her face was covered with blood and there were gashes. . . ." I shut it off. As if there were not enough of it in the newspapers, the B.B.C. was giving it to us for entertainment.

That night I went to an American play called *Detective Story*. The ingredients of the plot were abortion, theft, assault and murder. Going back to the House of Commons, a speaker was saying that if war broke out with Russia we would have to expect 20,000,000 casualties in Britain during the first week. Apparently the second week would be better, because there would not be so many people left to kill.

BUT lest my successor a hundred years hence should think that life in Britain way back in 1950 was one of unmitigated barbarism, let me tell him that in the midst of all this Mr. Winston Churchill, at the age of seventy-six, rose in his place in the House of Commons and made a speech on foreign affairs that would have made him an immortal if it were the only speech of his life.

He was nervous and hesitant at first, but suddenly the words took shape and the lofty conception of a troubled but brave world lifted it from oratory to genius. The House, which had been restless, became aware that one of those

great moments had arrived that would live for ever in the annals of men. Churchill realised it, too, and with that realisation the years fell from his shoulders and his voice was as vibrant and tireless as when he was a young man.

The M.P.s were so motionless that they might have been figures painted on a frieze. When it was over a subdued but prolonged cheer came from all quarters of the House. A Socialist, with eyes that were shining suspiciously, said to me: "We ought to adjourn for an hour. No one should be asked to speak after that until we have had a chance to come down to earth."

Therefore, I say to the author of *Sketch-Book* as he looks back, that we were not without greatness, even though the cosh had become an indispensable article in a gentleman's wardrobe.

But can any historian understand a bygone age by reading even such an intelligent contemporary publication as *The Sketch*? My wife, who can never resist a bargain, brought me home a bound volume of *Punch* for the year 1895 or thereabouts. Looking through the pages reminded me of what Hannen Swaffer once said to Osbert Sitwell when, for some reason, Sitwell asked him if he read *Punch*.

"I have given it up," said Swaff. "I can't stand those cartoons of one British lion staring at another British Lion and saying: 'Bravo, John Bull!'"

Yet the strangest thing about the volume is the humour. The smugness of it, the laborious parentheses, the explanation of the obvious, the snobbery and the pointlessness of the jokes.

Here is the kind of thing that sent our parents and grandparents apoplectic with mirth: A drawing shows an elderly bachelor at a children's dance speaking to a little girl on a sofa. Then there is something like this:

> Elderly bachelor (who has come to help out but would very much like to go to his club and have a whisky-and-soda): "May I have the pleasure of this dance?"
>
> Little girl (who has eaten too many rich cakes as well as chocolate ices and is in no mood for gaiety): "No. I am feeling sick as it is."

The joke isn't at all bad, but nothing is left to the imagination, and the element of surprise is carefully eliminated. Yet it was a period when Shaw was sharpening the nation's wits, and Wilde's brilliance had prodded the sluggish mind.

Perhaps humour, like everything else, has changes of fashion. It may be that a century from now our successors will look with equal astonishment on the streamlined jokes and drawings that make us laugh to-day.

At any rate, here is one example of humour that may elude my far-off successor. I give it exactly as it appeared in the newspapers:

"ROME. Monday, Sir Victor Mallet, British Ambassador, to-day saw Foreign Minister Sforza about Italy's award of a medal to her navy for 'Heroic conduct against a preponderant adversary from 1940 to 1943.' Sir Victor is said to have 'expressed' a certain amount of surprise.—A.P."

You may have noticed that Parliament has been giving Mr. Strachey lots of advice on how to run the Army. We were particularly entertained by Mr. Woodrow Wyatt who, from the Government benches, made some caustic comments on Army life as observed first hand during his service in the Hitler war.

Take sick parade, for example. According to Mr. Wyatt, if a soldier wants to report sick he must get up earlier than usual—about six o'clock in the morning—parade outside the barrack-room and stand for three-quarters of an hour until the sergeant marches him drearily across the barrack square to the sick room.

"This arrangement was designed," said Mr. Wyatt, "to prevent soldiers reporting sick unnecessarily—I imagine to make them die in their beds."

Then he dealt with the system of raising complaints. He described how the soldier is marched into the Orderly Room with a sergeant shouting in his ear, how he is then made to stand at attention until every thought is driven out of his head and he cannot remember what he intended to say. Warming to his subject, Mr. Wyatt then denounced the ridiculous system of laying out kit, with knives and forks facing in a certain direction, and all that kind of tommy-rot.

Listening to him I felt that if he had his way the Army should copy the discipline of H.M.S. *Pinafore*, when, you will remember, the following greetings are exchanged when Captain Corcoran appears first thing on the bridge.

> Captain: My gallant crew, good-morning.
> Crew: Sir, good-morning.
> Captain: I hope you are quite well?
> Crew: Quite well—and you, Sir?
> Captain: I am in reasonable health and happy to be with you all once more.
> Crew: You do us proud, Sir.

There may be something in what Wyatt says, and that the men's comfort and happiness should be studied, but I found, after four years' Army service in the First World War, that whenever I joined a unit where the Colonel was trying to please the men it was invariably a discontented battalion. But when I found a Colonel who insisted that the men had damn well better please him or there would be hell to pay, it was almost invariably a happy battalion.

However, Mr. Strachey seemed impressed, so maybe the Army will soon be having breakfast in bed, with real cream in the coffee.

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells in all things fair,
Spring with her golden sun and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

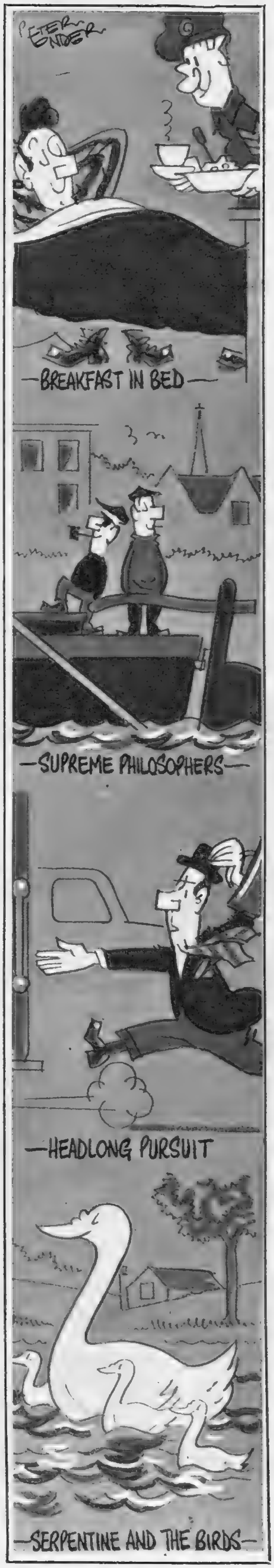
Beatrice Lillie used to sing a song called: "I Hate the Spring," but even her genius for caricature could not make it convincing. Who can withstand the "nameless pathos" of budding trees which is so close to ecstasy? Driving each day to Westminster through Hyde Park I would so gladly exchange the benches there for the benches in Hyde Park. To sit, perchance to dream. To let one's thoughts go philandering with the breeze. To experience, if only for an hour, the fullness of idleness....

It is true that on the Terrace we can watch the barges go by, and who in his senses would not be a bargee? They are the supreme philosophers, these men of brawn, for never have I seen them do anything but stand and survey the passing scene. I suppose at embarkation or disembarkation they perform some useful function, but for the rest of the time they have a glorious idleness which fills my heart with envy.

Most of us make our own treadmill. If there are no difficulties, we create them, and if there are no mountains to climb, we build them with the labour of our hands. I suppose we were not given endurance and energy and imagination to let them rot in the sun, yet how much we miss in the headlong pursuit.

Spring makes poets of us all, even though we string no necklaces of words. But now I shall get into my car and resolutely set out for Westminster, where we shall be prisoners until midnight. Stern duty calls, and as I drive through the Park I shall lash myself to the steering-wheel, like a modern Ulysses, and resist the siren voices of the rippling Serpentine and the birds in the trees.

Beverley Baxter



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Her vast popularity demands the new language bruin (forgive us !) round about the Zoo's charming polar-bear cub *Brumas*, daughter of *Mischa* and *Ivy*. Here is some of the wordage.

Candid Cameo

V. SACKVILLE-WEST, C.H.

By Ivor Brown

IT is a strange fact that one of the most English of our poets is a quarter Spanish in blood. For if anybody seems to be rooted in the Wealden clay and to be the very voice of the very English county of Kent, it is the author of *The Land*, which deservedly won the Hawthornden Prize in 1927.

That lady is the Hon. Victoria Sackville-West, of Sissinghurst Castle. Could any name and address better befit one of those Edwardian grandees of whom she has so charmingly written, from whom she was descended, and among whom, indeed, she was augustly brought up? Her youth was devoted to, and sometimes harassed by, a wayward, extravagant, unpredictable and yet enchanting mother of whom Kipling wrote, "*The* most wonderful person I ever met." This, with Knole as a background, was to find life very far from drab.

In point of fact, Sissinghurst Castle is not quite so ducal, nor even so baronial, as it sounds. It is manageable even in these days of "scrimp" incomes—one of the poet's favourite adjectives for anything lean. Amidst the economic pressures of the day it is still a refuge "tall and damask as a summer flower . . . Wherein I find in chain, The castle and the pasture and the rose." There Miss Sackville-West, who is also Mrs. Harold Nicolson, puts into practice her deep lore and love of gardens and all that they contain. There she writes counsel to other gardeners, counsel which itself is a series of prose flowers.

Yet behind this castled serenity of Kent lies ancestral drama and almost Ouidaesque romance. Her Spanish grandmother, Pepita, was the Star of Andalusia and danced her butterfly flight over the capitals of Europe. The tale of this Dark Lady—and that of her happily infatuated grandfather, Lionel Sackville-West, of the Diplomatic Service, *El Lord y la Ballarina*—has been written with admirable frankness by the granddaughter. Pepita's first daughter, mother of Victoria Sackville-West, was christened Victoria Josefa Dolores Catalina, the first name being a tribute to our Queen. It came from a source rather strange to her Majesty, who had little cognisance of Andalusian Stars.

Then this daughter Victoria was united with another Lionel Sackville-West, which brought her to great possessions, including Knole, that majestic example of English feudal architecture, where the buildings alone are counted by the acre and the beauties are far beyond the range of any arithmetic. It brought her also to be the mother of our theme.

So the author-to-be was brought up, like Dogberry, with everything handsome about her: and none has been more concerned with rural, cottage and Dogberrian matters than she. For she did not write *The Land* simply by looking out of mullioned windows: she knew, when she devoted her affectionate stanzas to the Thresher and the Hopper, the Bee-master and the Shepherd, exactly what she was singing about. Nor did she become a good gardener simply by horticultural strategy, intense reading and back-room planning: she cares to be photographed if picture there must be, breeched and booted for her daily battle with the earth and with all the enemies of fruit and flower, winged or weedy. All the same, the worker is always the watcher; she has an eye for all the fine shades and textures of England's fabric and for enjoying them. Her dislikes are few: they include blood sports.

She can pause, among the hop-bines of the Weald and the humming Kentish hives, to sing of honey from Syrian hills. When she married Harold Nicolson she married into diplomacy as well as letters, but she never liked to be, or to be regarded as the Diplomatist's wife and part of an Embassy. However, marriage meant Middle-Eastern journeys for the *Passenger to Teheran*, and sonnets out of Persia, which are in their way quite as fascinating as the cantos out of Kent. She was attracted as much by Eastern skies as by Eastern lands, and few poets have made the planets dance for them as she does. Aldebaran and Betelgeuse are nicely at her call.

It is an extraordinary thing, and a foolish one, that Victoria Sackville-West is not more quoted and "anthologised" at the present time. Perhaps in a world of notorious jealousies and absurd spites—for poets can be pussy-cats as well as pets, and creatures of a hissing, clawing kind—to have won a prize is fatal. In any case, fashions change, and this writer belongs to a generation that was capable both of keen enjoyment and of clear expression. Now our modish poets appear to be definable as those who dislike everything and are at considerable pain to conceal even that fact by choosing to write in cryptic cacophonies and obscure "mutterings." To these Earl Wavell, speaking for Winchester as well as the Black Watch, has properly called our serious attention: he would not have to scold the author of *The Land* and *The Garden*, whose descriptions are as lucid as a Constable canvas. Whatever Gigadibs may say or think, public honour has properly come this writer's way. She was made a Companion of Honour for "services to literature" in 1948.

Should fashion swing round again to harmonious usage of the well-picked word, then Miss Sackville-West's poetry will come back to its proper place in general esteem. She has explained that she hates writing novels and would never be good at the job: the first statement we may accept, but the second will not pass for the author of *All Passion Spent* and several other fictions of renown. Her mother announced that her daughter's poetry brought tears to her eyes; since that feat was also lavishly achieved by the odes and dithyrambs of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, the daughter was the less impressed. There was maternal anxiety for Big Sales and pressure for more stories; perhaps it seemed foolish to be linked with so big a place as Knole and then to sell less than Edgar Wallace. But Miss Sackville-West has stated quite plainly where her heart is fixed, with "the castle and the pasture and the rose," which means a portion of Kent: not the vast, ancestral Knole, now inevitably "National-Trusted," but an old house with a garden, books, pens and papers, where "Beauty and use and beauty once again Link up my scattered heart."

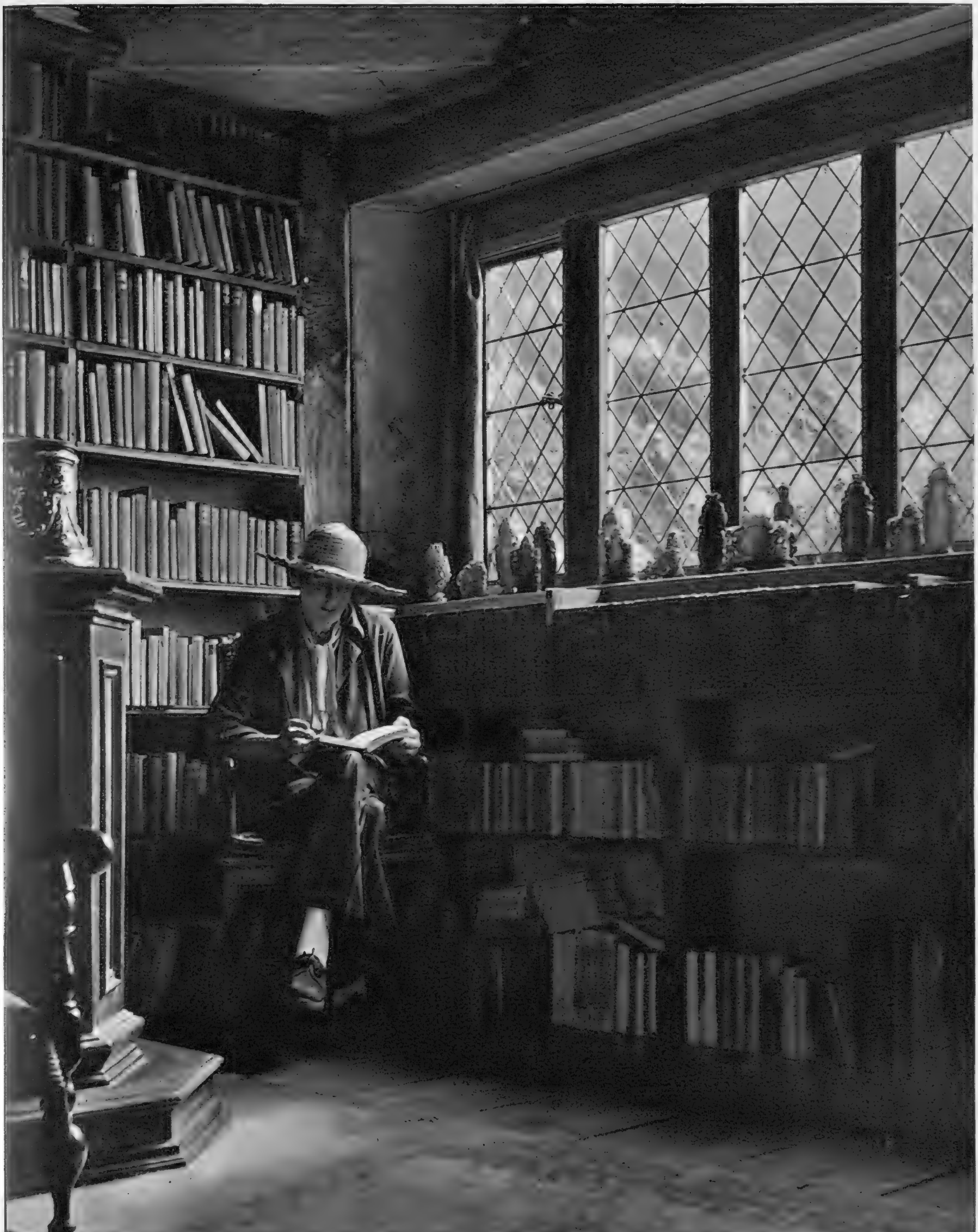
★

Who . . . Me?

WHO . . . me? Indeed! Well, I suppose one never does recognise oneself, seen through the eyes of others. The only thing I do recognise in Mr. Ivor Brown's pen-portrait is the clodhopping country-minded person, and also the "damned outmoded poet," as I once described myself in some rollicking verses addressed to my friend, Enid Bagnold. I think that was perhaps the truest epitaph I could ever have applied to myself.

And please, Mr. Ivor Brown, don't perpetuate the awful Christian name with which I was afflicted at my christening. I have spent the whole of my literary life trying to suppress it. Why can't I be just V. Sackville-West, instead of Victoria? In any case, I have never been called Victoria except on cheques and legal documents. My name is Vita to those who know.

V. Sackville-West



GARDENER, POET, AND CHÂTELAINE: V. SACKVILLE-WEST

Photographed by GISELLE FREUND.

JANE AND JAMES

JANE BAXTER'S new stage assignment, *The Holly and the Ivy* at the Lyric, Hammersmith, gives her the rôle of eldest daughter of a country parson, played by Herbert Lomas. The plot exploits the emotional storms and complications of Christmas-time on his family and home ; the character being based upon his own father by the playwright, Wynyard Browne. In private life Miss Baxter is Mrs. Arthur Montgomery ; she and her husband, with their three children, including James, live at Wimbledon.

Photographed by ANGUS McBEAN.

SKETCH DATE-BOOK

(Our Social Diary)

MARCH 22.

Crowded Opera Ball, 6, Stanhope Gate; costume-and-mask affair to aid funds of English Opera Group. Here's Lady Harewood adjusting her husband's mask; he was one of the Albanian brothers, she Lady Fordiligi, from Mozart's Cosi fan Tutte, for every guest was dressed as a character from an opera.

MARCH 23.

Netherlands Ambassador and Mme. Michiels van Verduynen's party at Dutch Embassy to Launch London Holland Festival Society. Lady Harewood its president. Its aim: to give advance news of programmes for Holland Festival 1950, due June 15 to July 15. Here's his Excellency with Mrs. Stein.

MARCH 23.

In party on the left at the Pytchley Hunt point-to-point, held at Guilsborough, near Market Harborough, you'll find Lt.-Col. Borwick (right), with Capt. G. H. Lowther, M.F.H., Major and Mrs. Allsopp, Mrs. Lowther, and Mrs. Borwick. Behind, mounted, is the huntsman, Stanley Barker. In picture on the right, Miss Herbert, a beautiful jumper, leading over the fourth fence in the Adjacent Hunts Ladies' race; which was won, however, by Mr. Gilman's Menzies, ridden by Miss Stanmer.

MARCH 23.

St. Martin-in-the-Fields for wedding of Lt.-Col. J. Wood, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Clairmont Wood, of Coombe Down, Beaminster, to Miss Pansy W. William-Powlett, daughter of Rear-Admiral and Mrs. Peveril Wallop William-Powlett. Reception at Admiralty House.

MARCH 23.

Dining at the Tate by candlelight round Rodin's sculpture The Kiss were members of Contemporary Art Society, launching one-month show of over 300 pieces. Society has the Queen for Patron; distinguished art-lovers on Executive Committee include Sir Edward Marsh, its chairman.

[Continued overleaf.

MARCH 25.
Aintree; the Grand National. Huge enthusiastic crowds fed to the course by 'plane, train and car. Their Majesties, Princess Elizabeth, Princess Margaret and the Duchess of Kent inspected some jumps on foot. Royal party is seen left with Lord Sefton, talking to Lord Mildmay, who rode his Cromwell in the race. Look right for jubilant owner, Mrs. Brotherton, leading in her winner, Freebooter, J. Power up. The royally-owned Monaveen finished fifth.

MARCH 25.
In Coventry's blitzed Cathedral its Bishop married Miss Diana Constance Thurston, daughter of Capt. N. T. Thurston, secretary of Cathedral's Reconstruction Fund, to Mr. Derek Walker, a former captain in the R.A., T.A.

MARCH 25.
Import of some 40 tons of Norwegian snow brought two-day ski-ing to London's Hampstead Heath—an enterprising move. Among 50,000 spectators were H.E. the Norwegian Ambassador, Lord Limerick, ex-President of the S.C.G.B., Colonel Sturmy-Swan. Jump was about 120 ft. high. First-ever London Challenge Cup won by Norwegian Arne Hoel, shown receiving it from H.E. the Norwegian Ambassadress.

MARCH 26.
The Queen attended London Symphony Orchestra concert at Albert Hall especially to hear Lady Fermoy, the soloist, a Sandringham neighbour. An excellent pianist, billed as Ruth Fermoy, she played the Schumann Concerto. Her Majesty told Lady Fermoy how much she had enjoyed the performance.

MARCH 29.
At St. Peter's, Eaton Square, Miss Hilary Kenworthy, daughter of Lord and Lady Strabolgi, married Mr. John W. Gilbert, undergraduate of St. John's College, Oxford, and son of Mr. Stanley Gilbert, of Boscombe, Hants.

SKETCH

MARCH 30.
At the Wildenstein Gallery, important Loan Exhibition of The School of 1830 in France *(the Barbizon school) was opened by H.E. the French Ambassador, M. René Massigli (left), in aid of the Hertford British Hospital, Paris. Right: the Hospital's chairman, Mr. H. C. Welman.*

MARCH 30.
At Studio One, a picture at the première of the new Cocteau film, Les Parents Terribles, *was Mrs. Guy Middleton, wife of the film actor. Her perfectly-arranged turquoise head-scarf was fastened with a decorative modern gold brooch.*

MARCH 30.
At the King's Chapel, Savoy, were married Miss Rachel Frampton, daughter of Cdr. P. N. Frampton, R.N., and of Mrs. FitzPatrick, and Mr. Peter Heaton, son of the late Sir Frederick Heaton. After honeymooning in Madeira they will farm at Cam Court, Cirencester; he specialises in breeding Ayrshires.

MARCH 30.
Holy Trinity, Brompton. Miss Penelope Doune Philipps—daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Philipps, of Brentwood, Essex—wore her mother's wedding gown remodelled when she married Mr. Anthony Lake, son of Capt. and Mrs. H. E. Lake. The bride is granddaughter to Lords Milford and Kindersley.

MARCH 31.
Forflissa Viola Kenworthy, daughter of the Hon. Basil and Mrs. Kenworthy, was christened at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, by her uncle, the Rev. the Hon. J. M. A. Kenworthy. Her first name, a family one, dates back 750 years to ancestress Countess of Atholl.

DATE-BOOK

APRIL 1.
April bride at Holy Trinity, Brompton, was Miss Katherine L. D. Tuker, daughter of Lt.-Gen. Sir Francis Tuker who married Major John I. Purser, R.E., son of Col. L. M. and Mrs. Purser, of Running Tide, Bosham, Hants.

[Continued overleaf.

SKETCH DATE-BOOK

(Abroad)

MARCH 16.

Paris. *Event of magnitude: world première of La Beauté du Diable, modern French film version of Faust, by Armand Salacrou. France's President, M. Vincent Auriol, "presided," and his wife present, with host of diplomats. In picture, the stars: René Clair's new find, Nicole Besnard, Gerard Philippe, Simone Valère, and director René Clair himself.*

MARCH 21.

Johannesburg. *Snapshot when they attended a race meeting at Turffontein course of Major-Gen. Sir Francis de Guingand and Lady Guingand. Sir Francis's horse Country Fair won the Stewards' Plate—his first South African turf success. He had distinguished career in the Army; ended up as Chief of Staff, 21st Army Group, 1945.*

MARCH 26.

Cannes. *Gala night at the Ambassadors' Casino and lots of British present. Gala supper too; the room darkened while golden rain of fireworks descended. On left Sir Bernard and Lady Docker, whose yacht Shemara was anchored in Cannes Harbour. On right, Lord Waterlow, Lady Sherwood, film actress Merle Oberon wearing beautiful "bib" necklace, Lord Stanley of Alderney and Lord Camrose. Left, below: Lady Orr-Lewis, with Mrs. J. Collins and Mr. Collins, who make their home in Cannes. The Rani of Baroda also wore lovely Indian "bib" necklace; she is living at Villa Nelly Roc, Cap d'Antibes.*

MARCH 31.

Paris. *Lucky 21-year-old was Lord Furness, whose American-born mother Lady Furness and aunt Mrs. Gloria Vanderbilt (no currency restrictions) arranged for him to take young party to Paris to celebrate in Edwardian splendour of Maxim's. Seen at table: Lord Furness, with Mrs. Gerald Legge to extreme right of picture; Miss Caroline Cust beyond him. Dinner something to dream of: oysters, caviar, steaks, with vintage wines.*

PRINCESS MARGARET

THE numerous engagements of her Royal Highness have recently included her first official visit to Lancashire, when she opened new premises for the Warrington Boys' Club (see picture on left). The Princess was at Aintree for the Grand National, where she is seen (above) with the Duchess of Kent. In the picture on the right her Royal Highness smilingly acknowledges the welcome she received at the King George Playing Fields at Gorton, during her official tour of Manchester.

ACCENT ON YOUTH

Students John Bailey (standing) and Michael Cox prepare the décor for the big social event of the year—the annual dance.

Variations on one theme. The model is seen in the background, with students' canvases before him. In the foreground Raymond Skipp mixing colours.

Men and women students of the Slade attend a lecture on *The History of Art*, given by Professor Rudolf Wittkower.

"THE SLADE"

LONDON'S great teaching centre of the fine arts is the Slade School of Art, University College, founded in 1871. It owes its existence to Felix Slade, wealthy connoisseur of the arts, who died in 1868, leaving £35,000 for the endowment of professorships at Oxford, Cambridge, and University College, London. Among its most famous inhabitants was the late Professor Henry Tonks, who forsook his surgery to become the outstanding teacher of his age; imbued his students with a new sense of art, especially draughtsmanship. Among his pupils were such distinguished painters as Augustus John, O.M., and the late Sir William Orpen, R.A. Courses of study include drawing from the antique and the life, sculpture, painting, composition, lectures, architecture, decoration, and the chemistry of painters' materials. The school admits students of both sexes, from every country in the world. Its tradition has been continuous and unchanged from its first day, founded upon the study and admiration of the Old Masters—the basis of which is the intensive study of constructive drawing.

Photographed by CHRIS WARE.

Stefan Knapp, a Polish ex-Serviceman, at work in the Life Class.

Comparing notes at the entrance. *L. to r.*: Michael Ruffery, Michael Heckford, Mrs. Martin Froy, Keith Sutton.

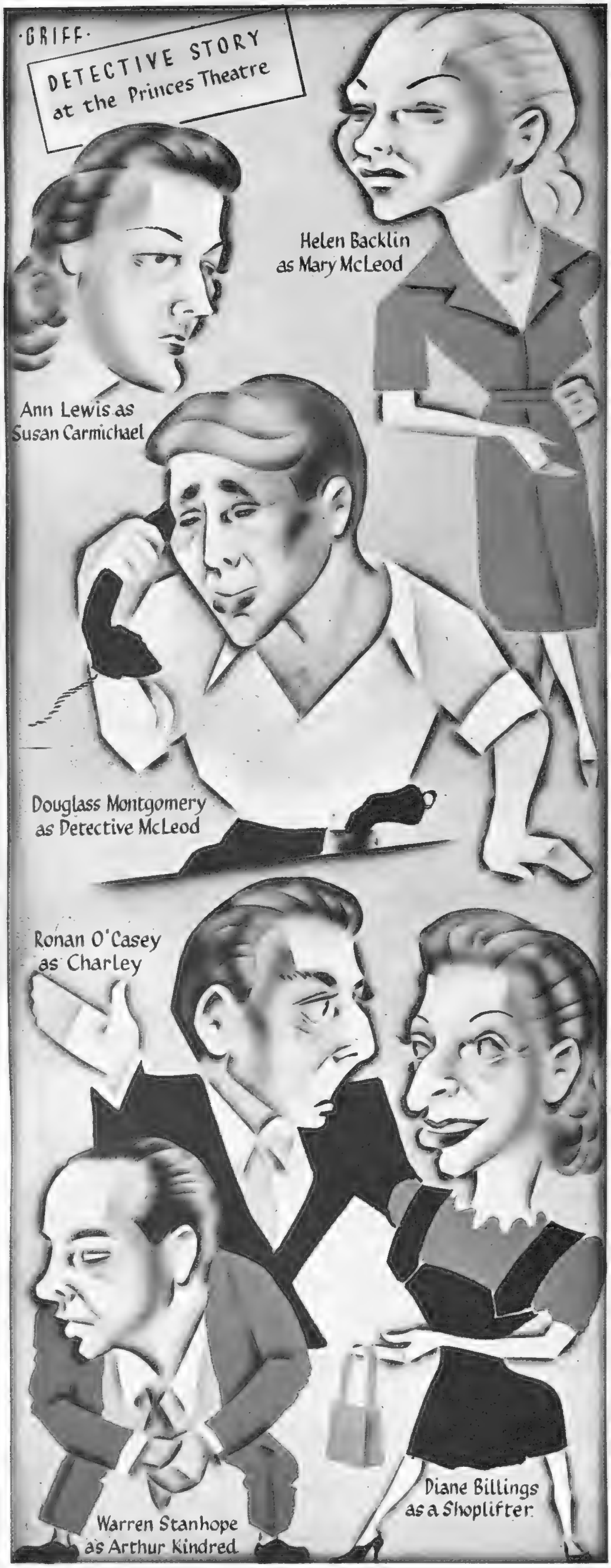
A coloured model in the Life Class has electric fires fore and aft to keep him warm.

"LAC DES CYGNES," ACT II.

OF the classical b
by Petipa to
principals. To-nigh

Photographed by ROGER WOOD.

llets, *Swan Lake* is one of the most poetical in feeling and sheer beauty, with its choreography
Tschaikowsky's music. In this lovely picture Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes are the
t April 12, this act will be danced at Covent Garden with décor by Leslie Hurry.



THE THEATRE

"DETECTIVE STORY"

I came away from the Princes Theatre resolved, on the next occasion I committed a crime in New York, to do it about five o'clock. This would mean—allowing for a quick arrest—a good three or four hours of mixed fun in the local police station before appearing at the night court. I may have got it wrong; but I stake my faith on Sidney Kingsley, the American dramatist, and on the case of the Red-Haired Shoplifter. (She calls it "Titian," but the Law, alas, sees red—plain red.) The Shoplifter has really very little to do with the piece. Yet, at the Princes, when Diane Billings was on the stage—and she was on it most of the evening—I found my attention continually straying back to her. She presents a silly-simple young woman who has stolen a bag from a store—imitation alligator-skin at that—and who, as a first offender, will probably be released with a caution. Meantime, duly measured and finger-printed, she sits in penance at the police-station while drama rages round her, and occasionally comments on life in general in her drooping, slithering whine. She gets quite happy as the evening passes; and I feel sorry that she missed the murder, which would have been One Big Thrill.

Do not, please, imagine that the play is all about a shoplifter. It is about a young detective with the eyes of a fanatic and a wife with a past; about a boy who has slipped badly, but who will probably go straight in the future; about a pair of burglars; about a rustle of other detectives; indeed, about most of the people likely to pass through the doors of a New York squad room. The fact that their appearance in bulk is implausible does not take away from our pleasure in a melodrama that is both a strong picture of an unfamiliar scene and a stirring theatrical story. The handling is expert, for the dramatist—obliged to keep most of his people on the stage in small groups—has managed to solve the problem of fixing our attention first on one group, then on another, without allowing us to be distracted by the crowded scene. Some of the actors should speak up—in the eighth row of the stalls I found a few of the voices blurred—but there is much direct and competent playing; a cast that includes Douglass Montgomery, Helen Backlin, Charles Farrell and Ronan O'Casey is an author's safe-deposit. And there is always the plaintive Miss Billings, ready for puss-in-the-corner.

Mr. Farrell is the sort of tough-egg police chief you do not find in, say, *The Blue Lamp*. No doubt New York policemen are wonderful; but they go about things in a curious way. Life in a squad room is one perpetual roar of noise. Prisoners sprawl round, in handcuffs or out; cleaners wander to and fro; lawyers hector, detectives bawl; the night runs on. What

"LATIN QUARTER 1950."—A typical setting from the latest luxury musical at the London Casino, an elaborate revue with colours, lights, galaxies of girls—and Vic Oliver.

By J. C. Trewin

Scotland Yard thinks of all this I can't imagine. *Detective Story* should be off-duty table-talk wherever sleuths congregate.

"LATIN QUARTER 1950"

Vic Oliver has the gift of getting an audience into an amiable humour. He strokes it until it purrs with appreciation. How he contrives this is his own secret. He says and does nothing very remarkable. He is an alert comedian with a husky-velvet, felt-soled voice; he is ever prepared to turn a joke against himself; and he enjoys playing the piano. Good qualities; but, more than these, Vic Oliver has the most useful sort of stage personality, a confiding, boys-together manner. He implies that whatever happens that night will go no further; it is just a party for friends, and there has never been an audience quite like it. Certainly he is the heart of the elaborate revue, the "luxury musical," at the Casino. Elaborate is the word. Robert Nesbitt has staged the affair with all his zestful ingenuity. Colours, lights, galaxies of girls seen through the cigar-smoke—everything is here. When the night is over memory returns, first of all, to Mr. Oliver as he faces the horrors of a really efficient hotel; to Les Compagnons de la Chanson, that happy regiment of song; to Sylvie St. Clair, a French singer who has looks and talent; and to Les Casavecchia, who re-create for us the endless racing and chasing of some early Mack Sennett film: an amusing bit of flicker-work. At the last, one is still with Mr. Oliver's hotel terrors in "Do Not Disturb"—that nightmare in the grip of a management forever sending its compliments when it might as well have sent a brimming bowl of hemlock and deadly nightshade.

"KNIGHTS OF MADNESS"

If I say that I do not find the Crazy Gang very funny, I take my life in my hands. Certainly, had I hinted as much at the Victoria Palace, an angry "fan" beside me would have uprooted his seat and hurled it at my head. Still, it is nothing but the truth. I admit that Bud Flanagan, in "Hey, Neighbour," has an expansive gusto, and that Teddy Knox is a most admirable comedian meant for far better things. I admit, too, that the romping about the theatre develops a mild exhilaration—heightened at the last by a relief that one has not been covered with a dust-sheet or fixed by a spot-light. But too much of the jesting is back-lane slap-bang. It is time we ceased to pretend that trite vulgarity is the crown of good humour. There are various pleasant things in this revue: the reminiscences of Leicester Square, for example, and the singing of Linda Lee and Jan Muzurus. But I would give another name to such matters as the Wedding sketch and the hurly-burly in a Holiday Camp.

"KNIGHTS OF MADNESS."—Jimmy Gold, Charlie Naughton, Teddy Knox, Jimmy Nervo and Bud Flanagan in a spot of hurly-burly at a holiday camp—typical Crazy Gang nonsense at the Victoria Palace.

SHOWS IN BRIEF

JOHN MONEY, ROBERT HARDY, GWEN FFRANGÇON-DAVIES.

"HENRY THE EIGHTH" (Stratford-upon-Avon).—Tyrone Guthrie's magnificent production is revived, with Andrew Cruickshank (Wolsey) and Gwen Ffrangçon-Davies (Katharine) as newcomers.

CHRISTINE RUSSELL, BETTY MARSDEN.

"THE PLATINUM SET" (Saville).—How The Rich Live (and die) in and near New York. Acting is better than the play deserves.

LAURENCE PAYNE, RUSSELL WATERS, ADELE DIXON, JOY PARKER, MYLES EASON.

"THE PROVOK'D WIFE" (Arts).—Vanbrugh's late Restoration romp works the one joke hard and tediously. The cast, apart from Adele Dixon and Julia Flaxman, does not really enjoy itself; or, if it does, fails to pass its enjoyment on to us.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

GERALD MANNERS, for being in the happy position of having no competition.

MEDICAL STUDENTS OF ST. THOMAS'S, for "rooting" with rockets in a Rugger final.

REG HARRIS, for being the first cyclist ever elected "Sportsman of the Year."

THE only boy in the class, Gerald Manners, seems to have things all his own way, for his queue of girl friends take their turn for his favours. They are pupils of the Cone Ripman Dancing School in London.

ST. THOMAS'S beat up London in the Hospital Rugby Cup Final played recently at Richmond. Students with the "Primitive" mascot are on the winning side and in charge of the fireworks stand. Rockets set off at intervals livened up the game.

REG HARRIS, professional sprint champion of the world, is the first cyclist to be elected Britain's "Sportsman of the Year." Left, he shows his trophy to Mrs. Fanny Blankers-Koen, the famous Dutch Olympic runner.

POLLY, cock of the walk, is well known around Leytonstone and is regularly seen perched on the handlebars of her master's bicycle. Mr. Ben Teff has trained her to warn pedestrians of his approach with raucous screeches. She's cocksure that no bicycle bell will put her out of a job.

THE annual event of the Handlebar Club took place recently at "The Old Cheshire Cheese" public house, Milford Lane, to choose their "Prime Handlebar" for 1950. Competitor John Roy, a Glasgow artist, won the title by a hair's breadth, with a moustache measuring 11½ ins. Checking up on the winning width is Radio Commentator Raymond Glendenning (right), President of the Club. Last year's winner, Allen Gear's growth (left) compared to Roy's is a puny effort—barely 9 ins.

BEN TEFF, for training his cockatoo to stand-in for a bicycle bell.

JOHN ROY, for putting last year's winning growth to shame.

. . . AND WE APPLAUD

MUIR MATHIESON,

For being the very wizard of a musical background to films.

TO choose, arrange, fit and conduct appropriate music to a film is the work of Mr. Muir Mathieson, Musical Director of the J. Arthur Rank organisation. He does it brilliantly, and has over 250 such settings to his credit. A few you 'll especially remember : *In Which We Serve*, *The Seventh Veil* (in which he appeared as conductor), *Brief Encounter*, *Hamlet*, *Oliver Twist*, and that lovely "short," *Steps of the Ballet*, compèred by Robert Helpmann. He has conducted most of our national orchestras ; many programmes for the B.B.C. and for Opera and Ballet ; has just finished collaborating on the exceptional musical setting of *Prelude to Fame*, due in London in May. Mathieson was born in Stirling ; won the Leverhulme and Boult scholarships ; studied at the Royal College of Music.

To house-proud housewives, Alex Morley-Smith offered expert advice on home-furnishing problems, explaining patterns and texture in fabrics, wallpapers and floor coverings.

Hugh Burden, who bears a remarkable likeness to the character, played the youthful Napoleon Buonaparte in Bernard Shaw's *Man of Destiny*. Opposite him, as the Strange Lady, was Valerie Hobson in her first TV rôle.

The battle on ice for the International Ice Hockey Championships was televised on several occasions. Fast-talking Canadian commentator Patrick Burns described the ten competing nations and the action. Above, "Face-off" during the match between Britain and U.S.

The American Club Theatre played William Saroyan's *Hello—Out There* at the Théâtre de l'Humeur, Paris. In the brief cast were Jamie Schmitt as The Man, and Varvara Pitoëff as The Girl. Eric Fawcett presented the TV production.

TELEVISION

by CYRIL BUTCHER

FOR exactly twenty minutes and fifteen seconds, this year, those to whom the Boat Race is a matter of personal concern were in a suitable state of flutter over the fortunes of their pe[...] shade of blue. The fun for television viewers began at the Putney boat-houses and ended with the personal interviews of seve[...] members of the crews at Mortlake—a matter of just over an ho[...] That, as far as the viewer was concerned, was that. An intere[...]ing race, a swell broadcast; now let's switch off the set and g[...] on with luncheon.

But from the transmitting end, the fade-out of the final picture [...] followed quickly by a congratulatory message from Big Ch[...] Norman Collins—marked the culmination of six months' care[...] planning and hard work by all concerned in the Outside Broa[...]casts Department (hereinafter called O.B.s). Six months' prepa[...]tion for one hour's programme seems out of all proportion, but [...] is a measure of the care O.B.s put into their work and of [...] magnificent results they generally obtain.

Surely no one will dispute that the Boat Race was brilliant[...] done. Not for a moment were we out of touch with the progre[...] of the struggle. Considering the uninspiring light prevailing, th[...] pictures were remarkably good—especially those by Duncan Ander[...]son, with a new camera, in the launch *Consuta*. The commentaries by a team with Michael Henderson at the head were excellently concise. If they lacked that melodramatic note which we might have expected, it was because it was not a melodramatic race. And who, in this hysterical age, will complain of a little typically British understatement in a typically British event?

Yes, the six months had been well spent. Six months in which to prepare an amazingly complicated network of transmission channels, communications and intercommunications. We are probably sticking our neck out to an alarming degree, but we want to try to give some sort of idea of how this bag of tricks was worked.

There were four main control-points at Putney, Harrods, Chiswick Wharf, and Mortlake. These, in turn, took up the story with their associated shore cameras, together with the sound and vision signals transmitted by *Consuto*, as the race progressed. The output of these points was collected by a nerve centre, situated at the Riverside Exchange building, and then pushed up to Alexandra Palace for transmission to the customers. We were privileged to

Frances Day starred in a "musical meander from dawn to dusk" entitled *Call It a Day*. The meander opens with Frances up to her neck in foam (as above). It closes with her tucked into bed at night after an eventful day singing songs by Michael Treford and Ann de Nys.

The University Boat Race on April 1 was televised this year on a most ambitious scale. Coming ashore at Mortlake is Cambridge stroke, J. L. Crick, to be interviewed at the Ibis Boat Club by Ian Orr-Ewing, after the Oxford defeat.

see this nerve centre, and in a plain van no bigger than a single-decker bus we found a mass of technical equipment that made our poor old senses reel. There were six television screens, microphones, telephones, knobs that turned, knobs that pulled, lights that flashed, and all sorts of other mysteries, mercifully encased in neat grey boxes which, we had a horrid feeling, might go bump in the night.

This Dante-esque inferno describes itself as a Mobile Central Control Room, a new piece of equipment used for the first time on this occasion. We were assured that it simplified O.B.s no end. Certainly Peter Dimmock, the Assistant Head of the department, who was responsible for the entire broadcast, seemed quite delighted with it. We listened to him, happily chatting to the engineer in charge, Anthony Bridgewater, in a dialogue that seemed to be composed entirely of initials, which we hoped were more decorous than they sounded.

But what we found most impressive in our back-stage view was the human side of it. We had always looked upon technicians as phlegmatic souls who did their jobs with a sort of cynical efficiency. Lo and behold! as zero hour approached, we found the vast crew of them, cameramen, engineers and producers, each getting as nervous and temperamental as a prima donna before a première. They all realised that there were no actors in this particular production: they, not the boat crews, were responsible for its success or failure.

So, on behalf of your team and to your good self, a large bouquet, Peter Dimmock.

VARIETY, Ally Pally's Cinderella, scored a couple of near bulls this time. *Call It a Day*, produced by Bill Ward and starring Frances Day, was a hilarious piece of outrageousness, claiming to represent a typical picture of the waking hours of la Day herself. She is an old chum of ours, so we can vouch for the fact that, hectic as it might have seemed, it was by no means overstated! It was great fun, but might something be done about her make-up next time? What was put on her eyes we don't know, but it looked like black marmalade.

Also we enjoyed *Light and Shade*, a short revue-offering by Michael Mills. Elizabeth Welch, who knows more about putting a song over than a dozen other artists we could name, led the cast, which included that fine fiddler Stephane Grappelly, David Hurst, and Patrick Brawn. The last two delighted us in an acid skit on a Third Programme talk. There was an interesting camera trick performed in this show. We saw two dancers, joined by two white shadows of themselves, moving in perfect unison. How was it done? Quite simply. By photographing their shadows thrown on a screen by another camera in "reverse phase," and superimposing the picture on to the one of the dancers.

Drama's best offering was *Mrs. Dot*, an early play by W. Somerset Maugham, and rightly presented as a period piece of the Edwardian era. Sonia Dresdel, in the name-part, presented us with a problem. Is she better in dramatic or comedy rôles? In this case she was quite brilliant in the latter variety.

On the other hand, we found *Men of Darkness* a crashing bore—after the first twenty minutes or so. It was a revival of a play about the French Resistance Movement during the war. If it had contented itself with action it might have been the monument to those brave men and women which it was meant to be, no doubt. But the action was overlaid with so much typically Gallic, ego-centric moralising that the whole thing became intolerable to us. Good performances, though. Especially by Victoria Hopper, Joyce Heron and Clement McCallin.

OUR CRITIC'S CHOICE

Peter Dimmock, Assistant Head of Television Outside Broadcasts, for captaining a team which consistently covers itself in glory. His six months' preparations for the recent Boat Race broadcast were well spent.

CHOICE OF THE MONTH

Selected by our Panel of Experts

LITERATURE.—Harold Acton (seen above in a sketch by Feliks Topolski) : For his Neapolitan fantasy, *Prince Isidore.*

STAGE.—Diane Billings : For the happy silliness of her red-haired Shoplifter in *Detective Story*, Sidney Kingsley's New York police melodrama at the Princes Theatre.

J. C. Trewin

RADIO.—Stephen Potter : For his classic of frivolous documentary, "How to Give a Party," which has triumphantly survived another revival.

Frederick Laws

SCREEN.—Hoagy Carmichael—pianist, conversationalist and prince of dry comedy—who tells the story of his friend the trumpet-player in *Young Man of Music* as if he were talking to you confidentially in a quiet room.

C A Lejeune

QUEEN KATHARINE AND HER WOMEN

IN the Stratford Festival production of *King Henry VIII.*, Gwen Ffrangçon-Davies plays Katharine of Aragon to Anthony Quayle's King—a queen of royal authority combined with devotion to her lord. Tyrone Guthrie, producing, brings to the play smooth pageantry and swift-flowing narrative. Tanya Moiseiwitsch's permanent setting is that of a splendid court. Their Majesties will see the play on April 20.

Photographed by ANGUS McBEAN.

" LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN."—A touching, dream-like picture of Old Vienna based on a story by Stefan Zweig, with excellent performances by Joan Fontaine and Louis Jourdan (seen above).
Right-hand picture

" YOUNG MAN OF MUSIC."—Starts well, ends in nonsense, but really depends upon whether you like the sound of trumpets. Picture shows the three stars, Doris Day, Lauren Bacall and Kirk Douglas.
Left-hand picture

THE CINEMA

*

REVIEWS

By C. A. Lejeune

" LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN."

Almost exactly a year ago, a remarkable little film called *The Window,* which had found small favour with the industry, sprang into sudden prominence at the instance of the public. The same thing seems likely to happen this spring with *Letter from an Unknown Woman*—at least, one hopes so, for the film deserves it. So far it has not had an easy passage in this country. It was released without benefit—if benefit is the word—of a Press show. The big circuits apparently did not fancy it. But it was shown, shyly, here and there, and caught the attention, not only of a couple of roving critics, but of the public. Letters began to come in about it; a formal Press show was arranged; it turned out to be so obviously a good film, and so many people said so, that it is to be hoped that it will be brought back into the West End by some enterprising exhibitor. (The management of the Academy, who rescued *The Window* from oblivion, please note.)

Letter from an Unknown Woman is the best picture of Old Vienna that we have had for a long time; which is not really surprising, since Austrian Max Opuls, who once made the enchanting *Liebelei* in his own country, directed it. It is based on a story by Stefan Zweig, and although it was executed in Hollywood, and the cast is predominantly American, the tincture of the original still seems to cling to it, and it has a charm and elegance that in these days of brash and brutal pictures is very rare.

It is told in a flashback, in the form of a letter written by the woman of the title from her deathbed. It recalls her girlish *schwärmerei* for a smooth concert pianist who lives across the hall from her, the short love-affair with which he almost condescendingly rewards her, the birth of his child, her loveless marriage to a rich man for security's sake, and the hapless return of all her old passion when she meets the pianist again some ten years later.

Joan Fontaine, who has done something of the same kind before in *The Constant Nymph*—fall in love, as a very young girl, with a musician, and eventually die for him—brings all her gauzy art to bear on the part of the touching heroine; and Louis Jourdan, an impressive young French actor who has never been sufficiently understood by Hollywood, makes a very believable person of the debonair pianist.

It would be foolish to pretend that *Letter from an Unknown Woman* is a great picture, but it is a surprisingly true and touching one, and I don't think anyone who sees it will feel that he has wasted his money. Some of the scenes, indeed, have such a strong visual charm that the effect is almost one of enchantment; and the spectator, soothed by delicate image and quiet sound, is lulled into a sort of nostalgic dream.

" YOUNG MAN OF MUSIC."

It all depends on whether you like trumpets. This is a serious condition: no fooling. The trumpet-playing starts in the first reel, and goes on, with brief intervals, for nearly two hours. Under the accredited supervision of Harry James, who makes no personal appearance in the film and, if he plays at all—which I sometimes suspect—plays anonymously, it is by far the most studied and stylised contribution to the picture.

The Young Man of the title begins to play the trumpet in childhood. After a first tentative essay on the piano, which he masters in one evening's exercise, he decides in favour of some instrument he can conveniently carry about with him. A cheap trumpet, bought in a shoddy store, gives his fingers the exercise they itch for. A negro trumpeter, leading a local band, gives him the discipline he needs.

The *Young Man of Music* goes up and up, until he rises to the pinnacle of fame according to Hollywood—the entrée, at informal hours, to the apartment of a rich young woman with a built-in cocktail-bar, six rows of pearls and a mink coat. He makes the conventional mistake of marrying the rich young woman, neglecting his old friends, and letting the cocktails and the luxury go to his head. After that, he goes down and down, until he ends up in a hospital ward without a wife, and has to fall back on a modest night-club singer (pure in heart) to whom, since she is the talented Miss Doris Day, he will obviously have to play second trumpet.

As far as story and production go, the film starts well, sinks lower and lower, and ends up with a candid wallow in unabashed nonsense. Kirk Douglas, star of *The Champion,* gives lip-service to the trumpet, but never suggests a professional bandsman to whom playing is as natural as brushing his teeth. Lauren Bacall, as the sultry wife, doesn't turn up with her cigarette, her cocktail, and her smoky voice, until the film is nearly an hour old, and gives the impression, which is reasonably true, that she has only dropped in for a polite visit. Doris Day, in a thankless part, is her cheerful, welcoming self, and how she could have remained unsquired for nearly two hours is one of the story's major mysteries.

But *Young Man of Music* has its points. The opening, in which a small boy realises how music can fill a gap in a lonely life, is charming. Juano Hernandez, the coloured actor who played so brilliantly in *Intruder in the Dust,* cleaves straight to the heart with his study of an ageing trumpeter. Best of all is Hoagy Carmichael, the lanky, persuasive pianist who tells the whole story in a flashback. There's genius in Mr. Carmichael, and the film, although rather grudgingly, reveals it. How good the trumpet-playing is, I can't say, not being an expert on these matters. But my impression is that it is outstandingly good.

It really depends on whether you *like* trumpets.

FILMS IN BRIEF

" ON THE TOWN."—Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra and Vera-Ellen in a boisterous Technicolor song-and-dance show about three sailors on shore-leave in New York. Vigorous of its type: no surprises.

" DANCING IN THE DARK."—A candid advertising brochure for Hollywood, not without wit and competence, in which a down-and-out former star is given a compassionate engagement as talent scout, and brings back his own daughter as the talent. With William Powell and a personable young thing called Betsy Drake. I was surprised to find I liked it.

" MOONRISE."—Dane Clark, Gail Russell and the coloured actor Rex Ingram, in a thoughtful story about a young man whose life is warped because his father was hanged for murder. Grimness shares the screen with sentiment, and it is not my favourite picture, but there is no doubt at all about its honesty: the aim is straight.

" BLACK MAGIC."—Orson Welles, who ought to know better, in a frivolous Hollywood reconstruction of the life of Cagliostro. The really funny thing is, that it doesn't mean to be funny.

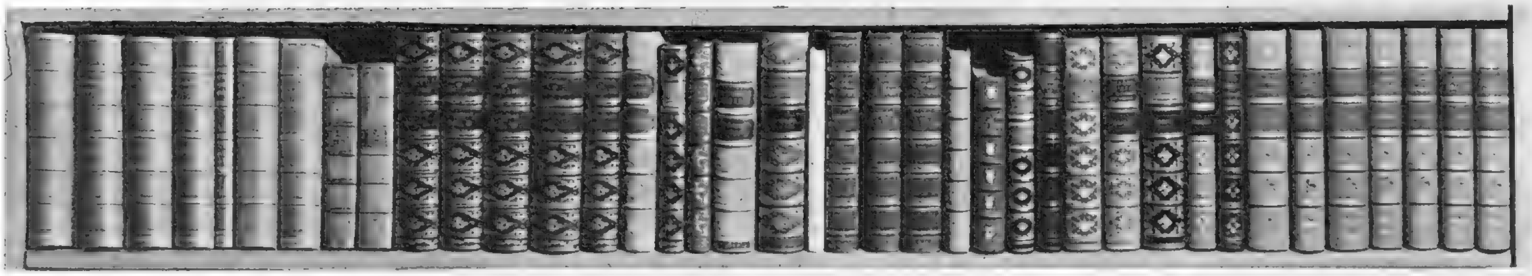
" THE BEAUTIFUL BLONDE FROM BASHFUL BEND."—A Preston Sturgess comedy, with Betty Grable, that tries to be uproariously funny, but so dispiritingly isn't.

" SOUTH OF ST. LOUIS."—Post-Civil War Western, simplified by the fact that the good men wear bells on their spurs, in sharp distinction to the bad men. Bearable and rather jolly.

. . . and

PREVIEWS

GENE TIERNEY will be seen in *Night and the City*, the 20th Century-Fox film which is due for release this summer. In this drama of London night life she takes the part of a dance hostess at a night club and girl friend of a gangster, played by Richard Widmark. Googie Withers also has an important part as the night club's proprietress.



OUR BOOKSHELF

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

THE DEVIL'S OWN DEAR SON.

By James Branch Cabell.

(*The Bodley Head ; 8s. 6d.*)

MR. CABELL is one of those writers who divide us sharply into "pros" and "antis." One may, with reason, be an addict and know all the long cycle of his novels, and feel familiar with his eccentricities of speech, the liberties he takes with time and place, and his sly and chuckling humour. Or one may, with reasons that seem no less adequate, find his books pretentious and derivative. They have a powerful atmosphere of their own, and although Mr. Cabell seems content now to pull all his old tricks out of the bag so that one knows too well the sort of thing that will happen, there is still a fruitiness and tang about them. In this story we meet not the knights and enchanters of a legendary Poictesme, but the major and minor devils of a very up-to-date inferno. A certain Mr. Dodd was brought up to suppose that the man and wife who kept the Bide-a-While Tourist Home in St. Augustine, Florida, were his true parents. He discovers that in fact he had been sired by a demon called Red Samaël, and sets out, carrying the necessary talisman, to visit his father in his home country. It is a journey such as has been undertaken by a good many of Mr. Cabell's characters, and leads Mr. Dodd through a good deal of allegory, through his own past and through regions showing what that past might have been, and eventually back to the city of St. Augustine, and a new heating system for his guest house, this last being a present from his infernal father, chosen by Mr. Dodd from every boon natural or supernatural, which might have been his. It is all quite good fun, and there are some suitably wistful sentiments.

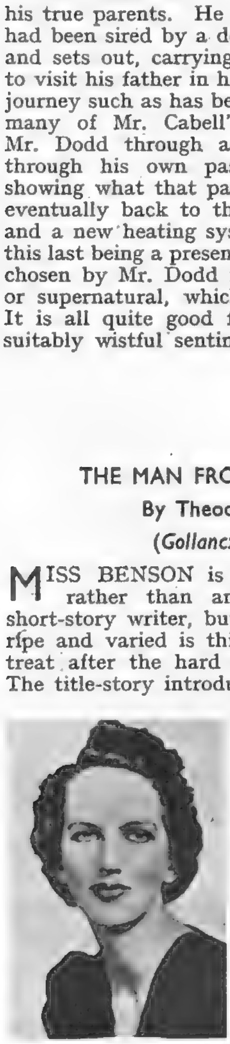
★

THE MAN FROM THE TUNNEL.

By Theodora Benson.

(*Gollancz ; 10s. 6d.*)

MISS BENSON is a skilled and practised, rather than an immensely significant, short-story writer, but how very readable and ripe and varied is this collection, and what a treat after the hard going of earnest novels. The title-story introduces a crazy ex-soldier of the Cameronians, who lives a hermit existence in a shack in the Highlands and tells a wild story about the exploration of the underground passages from Edinburgh Castle to the surrounding countryside by four men of whom only he survived the ordeal. There is a rather conventional tale about a rich American girl on an East Indian Island—the sort of thing that only Mr. Somerset Maugham can do effectively. There is a period piece about the murder of an eighteenth-century actor, and a cleverly horrifying description of a girl's train journey with a murderer. I liked better than the rest a study of paranoia, done with cruel verisimilitude, called *The Man with the Phoney Tin Foot.* A cock-fighting story set in the East, a circus tale quite convincingly done, a ghost story more quaint than frightening, one of those incidents about a fiancée going East to be married and running into disaster, an attempted suicide, a charming piece of early Chinese history, are among the others in this book. The collection once again makes one indignant with the library prejudice against books of short stories. A bookseller explained to me the other day that people do not like to borrow or buy them, because they have to "start afresh meeting the characters and imagining the scene" with each one of the stories. If this is really the objection I can only say that in this case it is worth the trouble.



THEODORA BENSON

★

AEOLIA.

By Ilias Venezis.

(*William Campion ; 10s. 6d.*)

I KNOW nothing of modern Greek, so I cannot say whether Mr. E. D. Scott-Kilvert's translation is a free or a literal one, but in one sense it is certainly an unusual achievement. The book reads with a smoothness, an ease, which is pleasing in itself, and it attains at times a positive beauty which must have come, surely, from perfect understanding and sympathy between writer and translator.

The scene of the story is Anatolia in the early years of this century, and it is the chronicle of a Greek family farming the land and living the eventful life of people in a country of extremes. In describing them the author introduces, without tiresome artifice, old Hellenic legends and a good deal of simple lore which is colourful and interesting. The farm is on the caravan route from the sea-coast to the interior of Anatolia, so that there are stories of travellers on the road, and smugglers and robbers, while the book ends in war. It is, say the publishers, "the masterpiece of the most distinguished novelist and prose-writer of contemporary Greece," and this may well be no more than truth. It is the first book by Mr. Venezis to be translated into English.

★

THE BLUE HARPSICHORD.

By David Keith.

(*Collins : Crime Club ; 8s. 6d.*)

THIS is not a who-done-it, nor a straight thriller, nor an adventure story. It is a rather ostentatious piece of melodrama with a sprinkling of hard-boiled humour. The characters are for the most part unusually ugly customers, as one may gather from the blurb's catalogue of them—"a raddled milliner, a bestial balloon-seller, a trio of glamorous wealthy beauties, a pickle salesman and his spirited old bride," and so on. The balloon-seller is so "bestial" and the milliner so "raddled" that the one is murdered by the other in a fit of sadistic temper in the first twenty pages, and a young University professor is at once suspected of the murder. His alibi could only be proved by another professor, who chooses this awkward moment to get himself confined in a lunatic asylum. So things begin to happen in all directions. Mr. Keith has one infallible prescription—when in doubt introduce another character. We are carted about meeting one odd human being after another, and they haven't even the interest to us of being suspects, since the murderer's identity has never been in doubt. Then, as we are "getting into" the story at last there's a lot of hu-ha with a harpsichord, and it is impossible to say whether it has anything to do with the story, because by now one has despaired of ever finding out what *is* the story and what is just a baroque flourish put in to make it more unusual. There is a rather incidental love interest, and, for good measure, a couple of performances of operas and lashings of phoney art criticism. And yet it is not an unlikeable and certainly not an unreadable book. Mr. Keith can be so exasperating that one writhes at times, but he has at others a rather winning way of showing off his knowledge of the arts and of some unusual aspects of modern life. With the reservations indicated, it can be recommended for armchair reading.

Books in Brief

THE SPRINGS. By Anne Goodwin Winslow. (*Heinemann ; 8s. 6d.*)

"A study of innocence," to quote the blurb, "and the gradual unfolding of the petals of a young girl's mind" in the Southern States of America.

✻

LET LOVE COME LAST. By Taylor Caldwell. (*Collins ; 10s. 6d.*)

Another American family novel with a suggestion of the Lear motif.

✻

THE MARTYRED PARROT. By Ian McLeish. (*Home and Van Thal ; 9s. 6d.*)

A character called Peter Lawson is traced from boyhood to his assassination by the employees of an Eastern oil refinery.

✻

THE CRUSADERS. By Stefan Heym. (*Cassell ; 15s.*)

The longest novel of the last war yet published.

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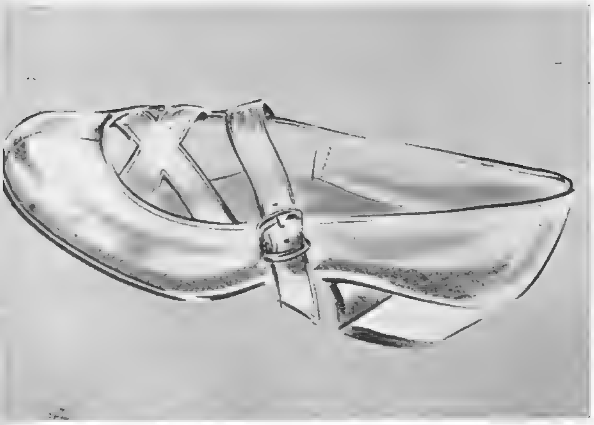
1

2

NEWS IN SHOES

by Elizabeth Penrose

LOOK out for lighter, brighter footwear in finer leathers to match the mood of a new spring. Enjoy casual comfort, plus the snug fit and the feel of a fine shoe. Quality in your footwear will repay with handsome dividends.



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1.—Soft opera pump of navy-blue kid with cross-traffic of straps, a tall heel. A Bective shoe, about £6 from Kendal Milne, Manchester. 2.—New sensation: soft shoes in town. Like the beloved country casual, they are not boxed, not lined. These are white suède thonged with navy, on a small leather heel. About £5 12s. by Bective at Babers, Oxford St. 3.—Glove-soft white suède cross-barred casuals with obvious quality and comfort. From Clarks "Skyline" range: 59s. at Swan & Edgar; Bourne & Hollingsworth. 4.—Pearl-grey, polished calfskin for a smartly tailored suit pump, a fan-frilled vamp. Created by Bective, £5 14s., at fine stores in most cities. 5.—Burnt honey colour—spring's most important neutral—for a shoe of sculptured simplicity. Bective crosses a vamp with three straps; adds a wearable medium heel. £5 6s. from London Shoe Co., Regent St. 6.—Soft, wedge-shoe in smooth calfskin, stirrup straps buckled across the instep. The colour: red. Joyce. About £3 from Lilley & Skinner. 7.—Classic step-in spectator shoe in a choice of five neutral colours. The vamp is glacé kid, the sides and quarters suède. £3 from Saxone and Joyce stockists everywhere. 8.—Strappy leather sandal in geranium, yellow, or five other piquant spring shades. About £3 from Joyce stockists up and down the country. 9.—Glove-soft, snug-fitting casuals in black suède, margined with kid. Team with your black summer cottons. About £3 from better stores. 10.—Traditional go-everywhere shoe, good company for Spring suits. £3 from Saxone, and Joyce agencies in all towns. 11.—Classic strapped spectator shoe in amber-brown calfskin, wedged and boldly-buckled. Joyce. About £3 from good shops and stores. 12.—Grecian-cut opera pumps aglow in patent leather, feather-weight and daringly décolleté to set off a lovely foot. £9 from Rayne; Daly's, Glasgow.

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BACK TO FRONT.—From New York (top right) comes something new in stocking design. Gotham Hosiery now makes cobwebby nylons with a delicate black line bisecting the front of the leg. So much easier to check on straight seams.

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WHAT GOES ON

Our Puppets Select Their List of Coming Events

★ *This List went to Press last week, so please check with the Daily Papers.*

CUPID

The engagement is announced between:

John, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Wilson, of Kilnahard Castle, Co. Cavan, Eire, and Jane Joubert de la Ferté, only child of Mrs. C. D. Martyn, of Kitchen Court, Petworth, Sussex.

George Henry, son of the late Mr. F. W. Strakosch and of Mrs. A. Villiers, 18, Wilton Place, S.W.1, and Patricia Clavell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Clavell Hore, of The Moorings, Hutton, Essex.

Sir Robert Frank, Bt., son of the late Sir Howard Frank, Bt., and of Lady Coningham, and Angela, daughter of Sir Kenelm Cayley, Bt., and Lady Cayley, of The Green, Brompton-by-Sawdon, Scarborough.

Major John Charles Balfour, M.C., son of Colonel E. W. Balfour and Lady Ruth Balfour, of Balbirnie, Markinch, and Elizabeth Jean, daughter of Major-Gen. Sir James and Lady Drew, Balavoulin, Glenfincastle, Pitlochry.

The Hon. Robert Palmer, son of the Earl and Countess of Selborne, of Temple Manor, Selborne, Alton, Hampshire, and the Hon. Anne Rosemary Cooper, daughter of Group-Capt. H. L. Cooper and Baroness Lucas and Dingwall, of Woodyates Manor, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Alfred Albers, F.R.C.S., son of the late Mr. N. W. Albers, and of Mrs. Albers of Newlands, Cape, South Africa, and Ann Prunella Douglas-Hamilton, of Becketts, Rusper, Sussex, widow of Lord David Douglas-Hamilton.

Richard Christian Allhusen, 61, Eaton House, Upper Grosvenor St., W.1, son of Lt.-Col. F. H. Allhusen, and the late Mrs. Allhusen, and Evelyn Jane, daughter of Lt.-Col. Sir Richard and Lady Chenevix Trench, 61, Courtfield Gardens, S.W.5.

Charles Irwin, son of Sir Nigel and Lady Ball, 4, Ennerdale Road, Kew Gardens, and Alison Mary, daughter of Lt.-Col. and Mrs. P. H. Bentley, Grove End, Bagshot, Surrey.

Stuart Duncan, son of Colonel and Mrs. F. Warren Pearl, of 20, Lowndes Square, S.W.1, and Pauline Frances, daughter of the late Major G. T. Jackson, and of Mrs. Frances Braham of Beaumont, Eastbourne.

SPORT

RACING

April 14-15.	Thirsk.
„ 15, 17.	Cheltenham.
„ 17.	Edinburgh.
„ 18-20.	Epsom.
„ 19, 20.	Pontefract.
„ 21, 22.	Catterick Bridge and Sandown Park.
„ 24, 25.	Wolverhampton.
„ 25-28.	Newmarket 1st Sp.
„ 26, 27.	Ludlow and Perth.

GENERAL SPORT

RUGBY FOOTBALL: Harlequins *v.* Bristol on April 15; Middlesex Seven-a-Side finals on April 29, both at Twickenham.

HOCKEY: England *v.* Ireland on April 15 at Edgbaston; England *v.* Scotland on April 22 at Aberdeen; England *v.* Holland on April 30 at Amsterdam.

GOLF: Halford Hewitt Tournament at R. Cinque Ports from April 13-16. Father-and-Son Foursomes Knock-out Comp. at West Hill, April 18-20. English Amateur Championship at R. Cinque Ports, Deal, April 24-29. Open Junior Meeting (boys and girls under 18) at Burhill, April 26.

HORSE SHOWS: Badminton (Olympic) Three-Day Event at Badminton House, Gloucestershire. April 19-21.

BOXING: A.B.A. Championships at Empire Pool, Wembley, on April 21.

FENCING: England, Scotland, Wales, Eire match at Edinburgh, from April 22-23. Public School Championships. April 20-22.

RACKETS: Amateur Singles Championship, Queen's Club, April 11-15.

SQUASH RACKETS: Champion County *v.* The Rest at Forest Hill L.T.C., on April 23. Open Championship at the Lansdown Club on April 12-17.

ENTERTAINMENT

STAGE

Old Favourites

"Oklahoma!"	Drury Lane.
"Annie Get Your Gun"	Coliseum.
"Traveller's Joy"	Criterion.
"The Heiress"	Haymarket.
"Harvey"	Piccadilly.
"Brigadoon"	His Majesty's.
"Black Chiffon"	Westminster.
"Worm's Eye View"	Whitehall.
"Beaux' Stratagem"	Lyric.
"On Monday Next"	Comedy.
"Young Wives' Tale"	Savoy.
"King's Rhapsody"	Palace.
"Treasure Hunt"	Apollo.
"A Streetcar Named Desire"	Aldwych.

Recent Choices

"Castle in the Air" (Adelphi)—Alan Melville's comedy, with Jack Buchanan and Coral Browne.

"Queen Elizabeth Slept Here" (Strand)—Dulcie Gray and Michael Denison in light comedy.

"Venus Observed" (St. James's)—Christopher Fry's exquisite verse spoken by Laurence Oliver, Valerie Taylor, George Relph, Heather Stannard and Denholm Elliot.

"Ring Round the Moon" (Globe)—a soufflé by Jean Anouilh translated by Christopher Fry, produced by Peter Brook and decorated by Oliver Messel; with Margaret Rutherford, Paul Scofield and Claire Bloom.

"Larger Than Life" (Duke of York's)—Jessie Royce Landis in adaptation of Somerset Maugham's novel "Theatre."

"Take It From Here" (Prince of Wales)—Jimmy Edwards, Joy Nichols and Dick Bentley in a stage version of the radio success.

"The Way Things Go" (Phœnix)—Lonsdale comedy with Ronald Squire, Glynis Johns, Michael Gough.

"Mr. Gillie" (Garrick)—Alastair Sim in Bridie's latest play.

"Home at Seven" (Wyndham's)—Ralph Richardson in R. C. Sherriff's latest play.

Just Arrived or Due Shortly

"The Trial" (Winter Garden)—from Franz Kafka's novel, with Swedish star Frank Sündstrom.

"The Green Baytree" (Playhouse)—with Hugh Williams and Brenda Bruce. Due April 18.

"Ivanov" (Arts)—Tchekov, with Michael Hordern and Helena Pickard. April 20.

Tony Martin at the Palladium from April 24-May 6.

"Sauce Piquante" (Cambridge)—revue, with Moira Lister, Norman Wisdom, Douglas Byng. End April.

"The Cocktail Party" (New)—T. S. Eliot's verse play, with Rex Harrison and Margaret Leighton. May 4.

MUSIC

At the Albert Hall:

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Solo pianoforte: Alfred Cortot. April 13.

London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard Van Beinum. Solo pianoforte: Frank Pelleg, Martin Lawrence. April 17.

B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. April 19.

Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. April 21.

London National Orchestra. Solo pianoforte: Eileen Joyce. April 23.

First performance in Europe of Schnabel's "Rhapsody." Solo violin: Yehudi Menuhin. April 27.

OPERA

At Sadler's Wells: The opera season continues, with "Falstaff" and "Faust" in the repertory.

BALLET

At Covent Garden: The Sadler's Wells Ballet will give performances nightly. The repertory includes a new production of "Ballet Imperial."

At Sadler's Wells: Ballet performances every Saturday matinée. Repertory includes "Summer Interlude," "El Destino."

ART

Guildhall: Royal Drawing Society. Children's drawings. April 17-May 1.

Royal Academy, Burlington House: Summer Exhibition from April 29.

Victoria and Albert: Exhibition of British Stage Design from April 20.

Tate Gallery: Contemporary Art Society Exhibition of Works owned by members, entitled "The Private Collector." Until April 23.

R.I. Galleries: Annual Exhibition of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-colours. Until April 28.

"In Paris Now." Exhibition of French contemporary painting. Sculpture and drawings by Georg Ehrlich. April 19. Leicester Galleries.

New paintings by Raoul Dufy at Lefevre Gallery, from April 19.

OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS

A Ball at the Dorchester, in aid of the National Television Fund, on April 20. Tickets two guineas, including dinner.

The Red Hat Dinner Ball at the Dorchester on May 2. The Countess of Inchcape is chairman of the ball.

A Ball at Claridge's, in aid of the Rhodesian Fairbridge Memorial College, on May 9.

The Rose Ball at the Dorchester on May 10; tickets two guineas. Baroness Beaumont is chairman.

R.A.F.V.R. Ball at the Bell Hotel, Leics., given by No. 69 R.A.F. Reserve Centre, Desford, Leics., May 12.

CEREMONY

Princess Margaret visits Wallsend-on-Tyne to launch the turbine steamer *Velutina* from the shipyard of Swan, Hunter, Wigham, Richardson, Ltd., on April 14.

The King and Queen attend a performance of "King Henry VIII." in the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, on April 20.

The King, accompanied by the Queen, will take the salute at the march past of Boy Scouts at Windsor Castle, on April 23.

THE

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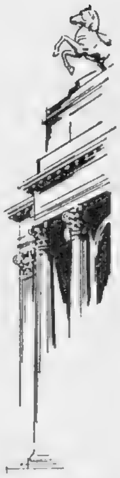

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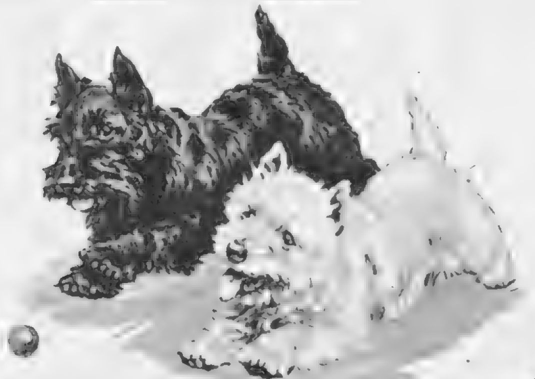

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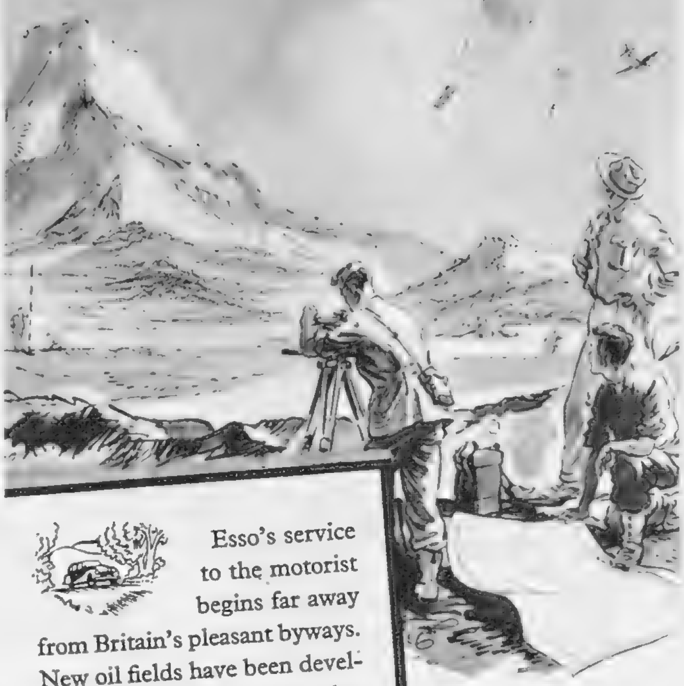

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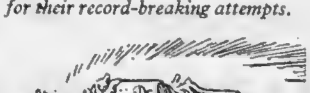

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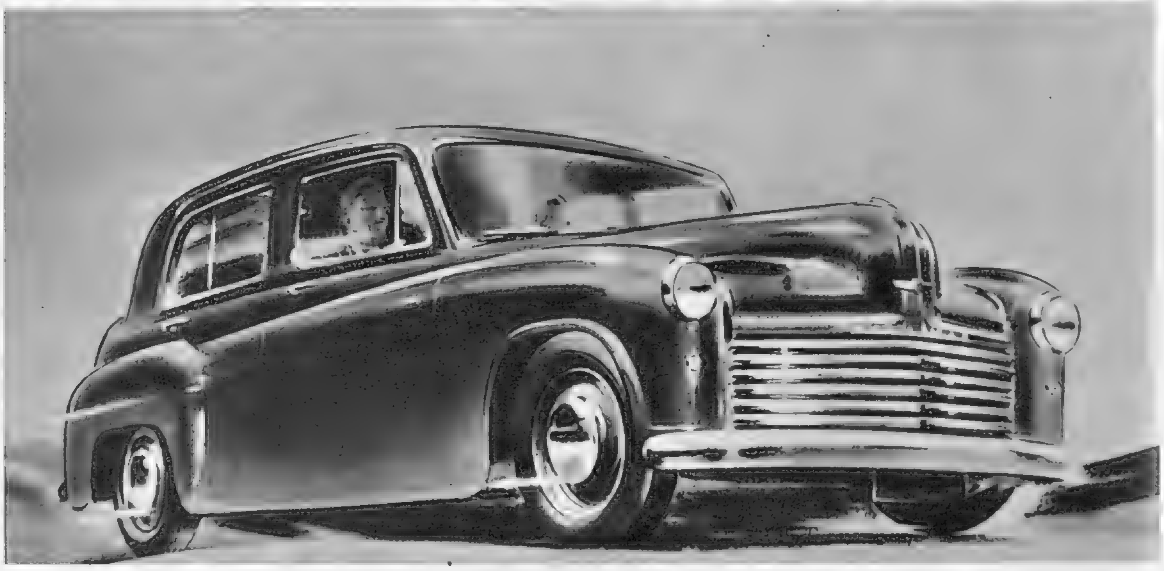

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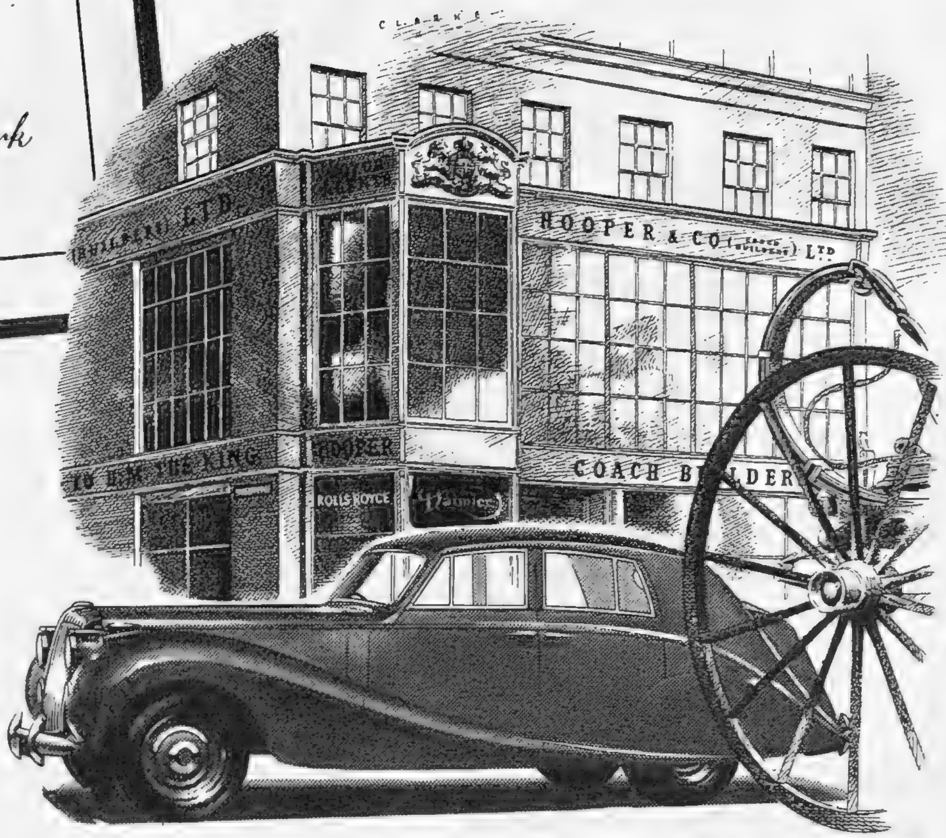

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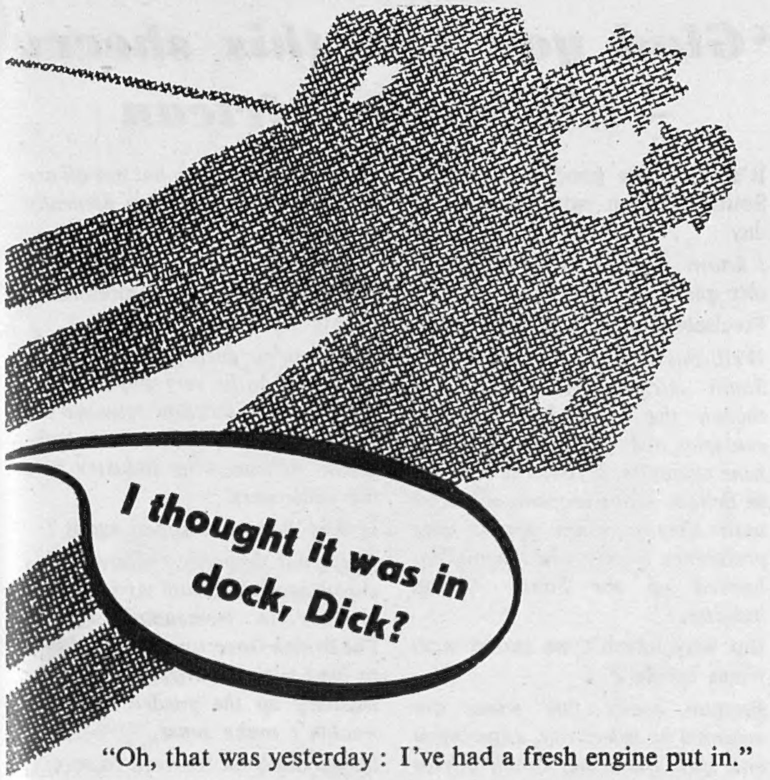

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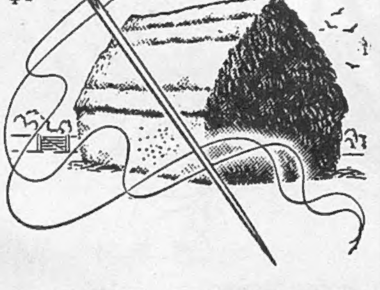

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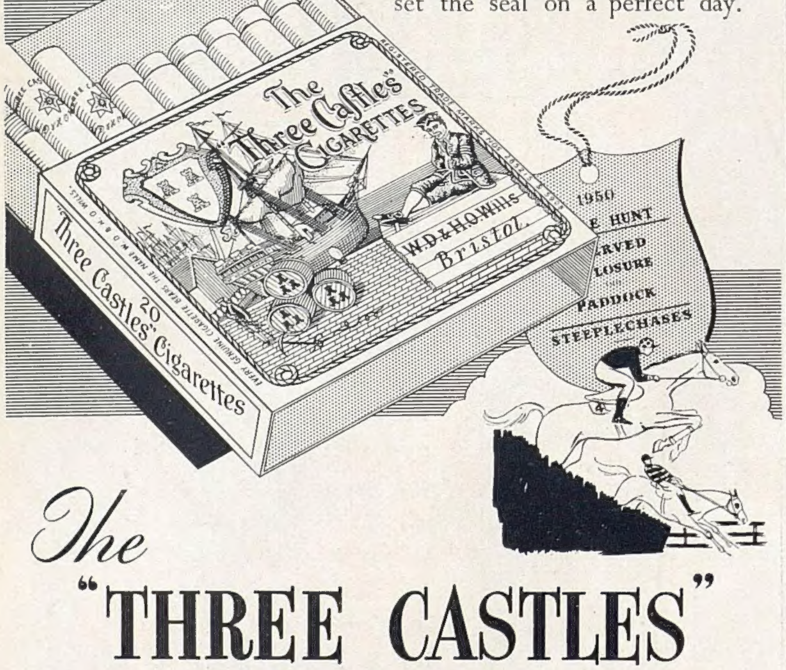

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